

THE GREATEST OF ALL MARVEL ROMANCES.

BROWNING DRAMA DONE BY WORTHY INTERPRETERS.

THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON

BY H. G. WELLS

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SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

Bedford and Cavor, two Englishmen, discover means of reaching the moon in a large glass sphere. They find that humanity is a dead world during part of the time, and covered with rain and mud at other periods. It is found that a small planet, which Cavor calls Selene, is the cause of the moon's surface. The Selene captures the two adventurers and holds them beneath the moon's surface, where the Selene dwells. The prisoners escape, but are pursued and caught in a running fight, where they kill many Selenes.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Hunt for the Sphere.

STOOD up. "We must get a fixed point we can recognize. We might hold a flag or a handkerchief or something, and quarter the ground and work round that." He stood up beside me.

and climbing-irons, and a hundred necessary things. "We can take back an earnest of success in this gold." He looked at my golden crowbars and said nothing for a space. He stood with his hands clasped behind his back, staring across the crater. At last he sighed and spoke: "It was I found the way here, but to find a way left always to be master of a way. If I take my secret back to earth, what will happen? I do not see how I can keep my secret for a year, for even a part of a year. Sooner or later it must come out, even if other men rediscover it. And then the Government and powers will struggle to get it. They will fight against one another, and against these moon-people. It will only spread warfare and multiply the occasions of war. In a little while, in a very little while, I tell my secret to this planet to its deepest galleries will be strewn with human dead. Other things are doubtful, but that is certain. It is not as though men had any use for the moon. What good would the moon be to men? Even of their own planet what have they made but a battle-ground and theatre of infinite folly? Sooner as the world is, and short of her, I believe has told too long for long weapons for fools to use. It is time she held her hand. Let him find it out for himself again in a thousand years' time. "There are methods of secrecy," I said. He looked up at me and smiled. "After all," he said, "why should one worry? There is little chance of our finding the sphere, and down below things are brewing. It is simply the human habit of hoping that we do that makes us think of return. Our troubles are only beginning. We have shown

down toward the central parts—No sane beings will ever let us take that space back to earth, after so much as they have seen of us. "We aren't improving our chances," said I, "by sitting here by side. "We stood up side by side. "After all," he said, "we must separate. We must seek up a handkerchief on these tall spikes here and fasten it firmly, and from this as a centre we must work over the crater. You must go westward, moving out in semi-circles, and so toward the setting sun. You must move first with your shadow on your right until it is at right angles with the direction of your handkerchief, and then with your shadow on your left. And I will do the same to the east. We will look into every gully, examine every skerry of rocks—we will do all we can to find my sphere. If we see Selene, we will hide from them as well as we can. For drink we must take snow, and for food we must eat and eat such flesh as it has, raw; and each will go his own way. "And if one of us comes upon the sphere?" "The other must come back to the white handkerchief and stand by it and signal to the other. "If neither?" "Cavor danced up at the sun. "We go on seeking until the night and cold overtake us. "Suppose the Selene have found the sphere and hidden it?" He shrugged his shoulders. "If I present myself come hunting?" He made no answer. "You had better take a club," I said. He shook his head, and stared away from me across the waste. "Let us wait," he said. "But for a moment he did not start. He looked at me shyly, hesitated. "Au

CAVOR SEARCHES FOR THE SPHERE.



HE SEEMED TO DRIFT THROUGH THE AIR AS A DEAD LEAF.

"Yes," he said, "there is nothing for us but to hunt the sphere. Nothing. We may find it certainly we may find it. And if not?"

"We must keep on looking."

He looked this way and that, glanced up at the sky and down at the tunnel, and astonished me by a sudden gesture of impatience. "Oh, but we have done foolishly! To have come to this past! Think how it might have been and the things we might have done!"

"We may do something yet."

"Never the thing we might have done. Here below our feet is a world. Think of that! That world must be there. Think of that! Think of that! Think of that! They were just remote outlying things, and those creatures we have seen and fought with no more than ignorant peasants, dwellers in the outskirts, yokels and laborers half akin to brutes. Down below! Caverns beneath caverns, tunnels, structures, ways—It must even out and be greater and wilder and more populous as one descends. Assuredly. Right down at last to the central sea that washes round the core of the moon. Think of its ink waters under the spare lights. It, indeed, their eyes need lights. Think of the cascading tributaries pouring down their channels to feed it."

"Think of the flies upon its surface and the rush and swirl of its ebb and flow. Perhaps they have ships that go out upon it, perhaps down there are mighty cities and swarming ways, and wisdom and order passing the wit of man. And we may die here upon it and never see the masters whom we must be ruling over these things. We may freeze and die here and the air will freeze and thaw upon us, and then—"

"Then they will come upon us, come upon our stiff and silent bodies, and find the sphere we cannot find, and they will understand at last, too late, all the thought and effort that ended here in vain!"

"But the darkness," I said.

"One might get over that."

"How?"

"I don't know. How am I to know? One might carry a torch, one might have a lamp—The others—might understand."

He stood for a moment with his hands held down and a rueful face, staring over the waste that deiled him.

Then, with a gesture of renunciation, he turned toward me with proposals for the systematic hunting of the sphere.

"We can return," I said.

"No longer about this. First of all, we shall have to get to earth."

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OTIS SKINNER

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Subtle Points in Poem Play Made Clear, but Not Vulgarly So, by a Trio of Clever Actors—Intelligent Repression and Suppression Mark the Inactivity of "In a Balcony."

I saw yesterday afternoon the presentation at the Knickerbocker Theatre of Robert Browning's fragment of a drama, "In a Balcony." This is one of the Browning poem plays which, it is popularly believed, will not "act." Yesterday afternoon it did. The cast was that of the October production at Wallack's. Sarah Cowell Le Moyne was Queen, Miss Eleanor Robson was Constance, Otis Skinner was Norbert. They were just such an accompaniment to the strong and exquisite lines as the lines themselves demanded. This almost means that the Browning matinee was the perfection of art. Only one piece of property was used in the play—a straight bench. The stage was itself a classic. The set was a white balustrade with two statues, one white in the moonlight, one gray in the shadow. There was a moonlit sea and sky, and motionless trees between. From long windows opening to the palace balcony half fell rose light. The mistake of visible moon or stars or stirring leaves was not made.

Wonderful Effect in Color.

If not a word had been spoken the piece would have been a feast of color and pose. The blue and greens and white of the Queen's robe, the pale flame gown of Constance, betraying the light in her hair; the coldness and warmth of shadows and high lights were managed with cunning. The three figures were alive as human readers of Browning as Mrs. Le Moyne. She forces nothing from the text. She does not offend by using elaborate measures to bring out the meaning. It is a delicate light to note all the joy in Norbert's stance, her blue and green, her incoherence, her half child-like delight—these marked, perhaps, her most trying moments. But her suppression of the deliberate pathos of her confession was admirable. And Mrs. Le Moyne contrived this: in the lines in which she hoped for her lost love, she recalled her love, and she could sing and cried wistfully to Constance: "But teach me how to keep what I have now."

She never once lost consciousness that she was Queen.

Nor did she do so in her stanza, when she found it was not she, but Constance, whom Norbert loved. Her five minutes of stage time were a masterpiece of restraint, excepting when once the lines came to her, she was wonderfully faithful.

One Fault Found.

Her fault was that her enunciation never fully reached the ears of the audience. It was a wonderful device at moments, as when her wistful cheek was laid against the balustrade, but it was not so frequently used, and the lines suffered. The great dramatic moment of the play, that in which the Queen returns to the balcony to find Constance in the arms of Norbert, was a masterpiece of restraint. She sustained it well enough to establish her place among the best. Her speech, however, was below the level of things she has done, though there was no room for his delicate humor. It is presumably a lover after Browning's heart. And yet, while he did with the

lines what he would, and each treatment adventured the meaning between the words, still the wonder of his speaking of the lines was greatest of all. The touch of the old school, which clings to Mr. Skinner always, lent passion and dignity to his Norbert, which almost no one else could have given it.

Miss Robson's Triumph.

Miss Robson was permitted the most "business." Mrs. Le Moyne had almost none. But of all the tricks of omission and commission, the most successful was the broken conversation at the last, when punishment by the Queen is sure to follow swift upon her discovery of the lover's deception. The words that pass between Constance and Norbert then are not significant, and they were deliberately lowered to unintelligible murmurs. Norbert's cry, "This is the end of me!" was the only indication of the ending.

Those who expected from the three

any sort of adaptation of "In a Balcony" to vulgarize the situations by more clearly defining them missed what they hoped. It is true there is no "action" in a Browning drama. But neither is there "action" in the same sense as the essential life of which Browning writes.

The audience was large, and it was

so enthusiastic that several good moments were prolonged and spoiled on the stage before the players were permitted to continue. The "fragments" ought to be accorded the distinction of applause the Wagner tradition demands.

"The Land of Heart's Desire," by W.

In Bates, preceded it was a graceful allegory extremely well done, in which little Mabel Taliaferro's work especially deserved a good bit of praise.

ZONA GALE.

RETURN PLAYS.

Anna Held, with her beauty unimpaired and vivacity undiminished, played "Papa's Wife" last night to an audience which filled the Grand Opera-house. There was every indication of satisfaction by the audience. To-night will be the 50th performance of this play, and in honor of the event souvenirs will be given.

Miss Lotta Linthicum, Ralph Stuart

and the American Theatre Stock Company revived "Darkest Russia" at the American Theatre last night. Curdin called it the "Hottest of the Hot" and the house was fully seated. The piece runs all week.

Daniel Handmann gave a very creditable

performance of Dr. Jekyll and Hyde last night. The play is a masterpiece of the performance.

The performance.

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The performance.

Mr. Hyde at the Murray Hill. There is not much in this play for the older characters, but the Donnelly stock company did the little in a most commendable way.

Many players of Harlem turned out

last night and gave "Are You a Mason?" a reception which must have been satisfactory to the players.

Chauncey Olcott gave, by request

of his many friends, "Sweet Innisarra" at the fourteenth Street Theatre last night. The play is his farewell performance. The house was filled.

Waiter's stock company gave an excellent

performance of "The Night of the Queen" at the Metropolitan.

THE BROOKLYN THEATRES.

"My Lady" and "Ben Hur" Among

the Hits Presented.

"My Lady," an extravaganza which has won considerable success in Manhattan, was presented at the Grand Opera-house, in Brooklyn, last night. Charles J. Ross sang a new topical song, and a number of other excellent specialties were introduced by the members of the large company.

"All on Account of Eliza" was the

bill at the Montauk Theatre, with Louis Mann and Clara Lipman in the leading characters. Both play and players were received with the same enthusiasm that marked their engagement in Brooklyn earlier in the season.

"Ben Hur" last night began the third week of its successful run at the Columbia Theatre, and the attendance, during the last two weeks, showed that Brooklyn theatre-goers are ready to market their engagement in Brooklyn earlier in the season.

James J. Corbett, the pugilist, was the feature of the bill at the Orpheum last night. Other entertainers who interested the audience were Odell Williams in a sketch, Stuart and Herbert, the Blondells, Melville and Heston, Ernest Hogan, La Tour and Zaza, and the "Romance of Court and Country" was given at the Bijou. A steamboat race on the Hudson and a cotton press in operation were among the realistic features of the performance.

The performance.

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